

Establishment of Immigration Appeal Board
part of his philosophy to protect individuals against abuse of government authority.

Such a concern is worthy of praise in general. I also believe one must not carry it too far and that community rights will nevertheless always come before individual rights. I think that if that reasoning goes too far and the government is deprived of the means at its disposal to protect society against security risks, then the whole common good is liable to suffer disastrous effects.

I believe the appeal board will surely have a part to play in the case of immigrants of merit, the ones that have been carefully selected; I think those immigrants are a real wealth for this country. I am going to add a comment that runs counter to standing orders, Mr. Speaker, but I wish to point out to the minister that publicity should probably be emphasized so that the public understands very well the value of selective immigration in this country. Unfortunately, people are unaware of it. People still think that immigrants come here to fill jobs and cause unemployment in this country, which is not true.

I believe the minister should accede to the requests of those organizations which call for the establishment of reception committees for immigrants, try to create a better atmosphere, to prepare for them a propitious psychological climate and follow them afterwards, during the first months and the first years, to help them become Canadians as soon as possible and as well as possible. I think that in the case of the normal immigrant, great importance should be attached to the human considerations I mentioned a while ago.

● (6:20 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker, I feel that in the case of security risks, the government must be allowed at least some discretion. Let us not require of the government that it make public, for instance, its methods of investigation, with the result that once more the members of the underworld, or the mafia, whatever you would call it, will resort to every possible means to protect themselves against the machinery the government uses to protect the commonweal.

I am of those, who have yet to understand why the member for York South (Mr. Lewis) and his colleagues, at the beginning of the session last year, insisted on defending Victor Spencer who, to my mind, seemed quite content with the way he had been treated and who, once again, as far as one could see, was forced to a certain extent to demand a

[Mr. Mongrain.]

new investigation. I wonder if all that did not contribute to hasten his death, although he was ill already. Still, I feel that this matter of protecting the individual against the state is being overdone, carried too far, exaggerated. It must not be pushed to the point where troublemakers, security risks, wrongdoers, notorious gangsters, members of the international mafia, are shielded against the legitimate protection the government wants to give the public.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot imagine any government, regardless of the party in power, trying to lessen the chances of any acceptable immigrant to settle in Canada.

We may have different concepts of the commonweal, but I for one still believe in the principle of authority and not in the abuse of authority. I do not believe in despotism nor indictment, but I believe that democracy must accept certain barriers, certain limitations and decide on the authority it has chosen and established legally. Let it have at least the power to use this authority for the commonweal in cases as extreme as security risks.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that the hon. minister could do more as concerns departmental employees at the lower level, for instance, officers in various centers who, it seems, have not received proper training and who seem to lack the necessary tact in matters relating to human considerations such as those involved in accepting immigrants to this country. Some of these officers seem to take the liberty of giving a personal interpretation of government policy, sometimes applying regulations with excessive authority. I am not saying this is a crime, I am not saying this has taken scandalous proportions so far, but I feel that those who mentioned earlier that human factors had to be taken into account were right in doing so.

It might be advisable to submit immigration officers to periodical instruction, having them participate in forums at regular intervals, so that they will become aware of the fact that the problems they are dealing with are related to an individual with a family and relatives, who has his life to live and who, therefore, must be treated with great consideration.

It sometimes happens that these people are detained in intolerable conditions. While I am not calling this crime, I feel it must be said, and the hon. minister surely must have given it some thought, even though he has not had time to take action so far.